AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Please amend claims 1, 6, 11, 12, 19, 24, and 29 as follows.

Please cancel claims 2, 10, 13, 20, and 28 without prejudice.

1. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:

defining at least two transmit queues for a priority level group;

receiving at least two transmit requests substantially simultaneously; and

wherein, if the at least two transmit requests correspond to packets from s parate flows, the packets having a priority designation corresponding to the priority level group, then processing the at least two transmit requests substantially in parallel and queu ng the packets separately in the at least two transmit queues;

wherein, if the at least two transmit requests correspond to packets from a c mmon flow, then processing the at least two transmit requests substantially in series and queu ng the packets together in one of the at least two transmit queues.

2. (Cancelled)

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the priority level group correspon s to at least one communication protocol priority level.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the priority level group comprises a single priority level.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the priority level group comprises wo or more priority levels.

6. (Currently amended) A method, comprising:

defining at least two transmit queues to correspond to at least one priority level

receiving at least two transmit requests at a send packet function of a devic· driver substantially simultaneously, the at least two transmit requests corresponding to at l· ıst two packets;

assigning each of the at least two packets to a queue group in response to a riority designation, the queue group comprising the at least two transmit queues correspor ling to the at least one priority level;

assigning each of the at least two packets to one of the at least two transmit qı ues in response to a flow characteristic; and

wherein, if the at least two packets correspond to different queue assignmen s, then processing the at least two transmit requests substantially in parallel and queuing the ıt least two packets separately in the at least two transmit queues;

wherein assigning each of the at least two packets to one of the at least two t ansmit queues comprises correlating an output generated by an algorithm with a define value associated uniquely with each of the at least two transmit queues.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the priority designation correspor ls to a communication protocol priority level.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the flow characteristic comprises at least a portion of a destination address associated with each of the at least two packets.

9. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein assigning each of the at least two ackets to a queue group comprises correlating the priority designation with at least one priori v level associated uniquely with the queue group.

10. (Cancelled)

11. (Currently amended) The method of claim ~~10~~ 6, wherein the algorithm com ises a hashing algorithm.

12. (Currently amended) An apparatus, comprising:

a plurality of processors; and

a memory, coupled to the plurality of processors, to store a plurality of instr ctions, the memory configured to provide at least two transmit queues accessible y the communications interface, and wherein execution of the instructions by the plur ity of processors causes the apparatus to:

define the at least two transmit queues for a priority level group;

receive, substantially simultaneously, a plurality of transmit requests at the p urality of processors, each of the transmit requests corresponding to a packet having a riority designation and a flow characteristic; and

process the two or more transmit requests substantially in series and qu e the packets together in one of the at least two transmit queues in response to a determinati n that the packets have equivalent flow characteristics;

wherein, if two or more of the plurality of transmit requests correspond to ackets having distinct flow characteristics, the packets having a priority designation corresp nding to the priority level group, then process the two or more of the plurality of transmit r quests substantially in parallel and queue the packets separately in the at least two transmit qu ues.

13. (Cancelled)

14. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the priority level group corresp nds to at least one communication protocol priority level.

15. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the priority level group com ises a single priority level.

16. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the priority level group compri: es two or more priority levels.

17. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the priority designation corresp nds to a communication protocol priority level.

18. (Original) The apparatus of claim 12, wherein the flow characteristic comp ises at least a portion of a destination address associated with each packet.

19. (Currently amended) An article of manufacture, comprising:
a machine-readable medium that provides instructions, which, when executed by a m chine, cause the machine to:

define at least two transmit queues for a priority level group;

receive at least two transmit requests substantially simultaneously; and

process the at least two transmit requests substantially in series and queue the ackets together in one of the at least two transmit queues in response to a determination tha the at least two transmit requests correspond to packets from a common flow;

wherein, if the at least two transmit requests correspond to packets from s parate flows, the packets having a priority designation corresponding to the priority level group, then processing the at least two transmit requests substantially in parallel and queu ng the packets separately in the at least two transmit queues.

20. (Cancelled)

21. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein the priority leve group corresponds to at least one communication protocol priority level.

22. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein the priority leve group comprises a single priority level.

23. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 19, wherein the priority leve group comprises two or more priority levels.

24. (Currently amended) An article of manufacture, comprising:

a machine-readable medium that provides instructions, which, when executed by a machine, cause the machine to:

define at least two transmit queues to correspond to at least one priority level;

receive at least two transmit requests at a send packet function of a device driver substantially simultaneously, the at least two transmit requests corresponding to at least two packets;

assign each of the at least two packets to a queue group in response to a priority designation, the queue group comprising the at least two transmit queues corresponding to the at least one priority level;

assign each of the at least two packets to one of the at least two transmit queues in response to a flow characteristic; and

wherein, if the at least two packets correspond to different queue assignments, then process the at least two transmit requests substantially in parallel and queue the at least two packets separately in the at least two transmit queues;

wherein assigning each of the at least two packets to one of the at least two transmit queues comprises correlating an output generated by an algorithm with a defined value associated uniquely with each of the at least two transmit queues.

25. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 24, wherein the priority designation corresponds to a communication protocol priority level.

26. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 24, wherein the flow characteristic comprises at least a portion of a destination address associated with each of the at least two packets.

27. (Original) The article of manufacture of claim 24, wherein assigning each of the at least two packets to a queue group comprises correlating the priority designation with at least one priority level associated uniquely with the queue group.

28. (Cancelled)

29. (Currently amended) The article of manufacture of claim ~~28~~ 24, wherein the algorithm comprises a hashing algorithm.